

## **LENNON'S SISTER TALKING ABOUT JULIA'S BANJO**

Taken from Julia Baird's book 'Imagine This', John Lennon's sister talks about their mother teaching John how to play the banjo.

"I can see John so clearly, concentrating intently on the mother-of-pearl backed banjo that belonged to his grandfather, who had brought it back from a sea trip and then left it to our mother.

She would stand behind him, leaning over his shoulder, and raise the neck of the banjo high. She would place her hands over his, their left hands on the neck of the banjo and the right hands in the strumming position over the hole, and notes would happen. Sometimes to get it right, she would tell him just to concentrate on the left hand and she would strum or finger pluck. Sometimes she would press the strings herself to change the notes and John would strum and pick and pluck as loud as he could, making music. They would roar with laughter and he would be delighted with himself.

Other times, our mother the musician would place his hands on the string in the right position, come round to face him and then carry on instructing from there. Sometimes a record would be playing, slowed down to the slowest speed, sounding weird, while John strummed slowly but loudly along to the ghostly refrain. Then Mummy would take the banjo herself, return the needle dial to normal speed and play along, with John staring at her fingers on the strings, playing air guitar, before he had another go."